

Mountain Laurel Invitational

June 11-15, 2014

The Chattooga Club

Cashiers, NC



The Twenty Second Annual Mountain Laurel Invitational Tournament was held between June 11th and June 15th at the picturesque setting in the mountains of Southwest North Carolina. Hosted by the Chattooga Club in Cashiers, NC, the setting was everything any one could want. Utilizing three courts set just below the open pavilion and lodge with a backdrop of two mountains, made for spectacular sunrises.



Open practice on Tuesday afternoon preceded the opening party on the Pavilion, set just off the courts. The format this year would be block play singles leading to modified double elimination in all flights, following block play. Participants were divided into three flights, Championship with twelve players at -1.5 to +3.5 handicaps, average 1.1; First flight with seven players, handicaps 4.5 to 6, average 5.3 and Second flight with eight players with handicaps from 8 to 11, average 9.4

The weather was generally ideal for croquet. The days were comfortable in the seventies, with mornings at 55 degrees and partly cloudy. Late Thursday and Friday afternoon brought rain, hard enough to flood the courts. The rain we could live with, but the lightning shut down the courts each day long enough to disrupt the schedule. The front passed through fairly quickly, and the courts were clear within thirty minutes, however due to the time of the day it was necessary to peg down six games. By mutual consent play started at 8 AM Friday, and we were able to pick up the lost time.

Breakfast each morning, with an omelet, cooked to order, delicious fresh fruit plates, cereal and fresh baked pastries, preceded morning croquet, lunch ordered off the menu as a guest of the club was followed by afternoon croquet, which lead to cocktails with heavy hors d'oeuvres. Wednesday evening was dinner off the extensive club menu. Thursday evening was the only open evening for the week. Friday evening J.F. and Peggy Bryan

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hosted cocktails and a buffet dinner party at their spectacular home, high on the mountain side. Saturday's sit down dinner, after cocktails in the library, consisted of a salad of mixed greens with walnuts, followed by Beef Tenderloin & Shrimp Scampi Duo with whipped potatoes, with a dessert of carrot cake with caramel sauce.

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday were devoted to block play in all flights. Saturday saw the beginning of the elimination ladders, with the quarterfinal; semi-final, and final rounds on Sunday.

Championship Flight singles, with twelve players divided into two blocks of six, had Jackie Jones and David Ekstrom leading the two blocks, undefeated, at the end of block play. All were seeded into a modified Double elimination ladder (Eight had double life, four had single life.). Play went, somewhat as expected with David Ekstrom proceeding to the finals with no losses. After the second round John Hunter proceeded to the quarter finals (Jackie had withdrawn) and was defeated by David, and in the loser's side was in turn defeated by Bill Daigle, who had spent the entire time working his way up, having lost the first game to David. Bill Daigle then went to the finals and upset David 19 to 17 in a very exciting game.

First Flight singles, consisting of seven players, saw George Bagwell lead the block with six wins, with Calvert Chaney second with five wins. Having shown what they could do in the block, they continued their winning streak to the semi-final, where George bested Calvert, sending him to the loser's ladder, where he beat Mark Fields to return to the finals against George once again. In a close match George was determined to take the tournament and bested Calvert 13 to 12 in a close game.

Second flight saw eight players vie for honors. Michael Kline took the block honors with five wins, closely followed by Patricia Duncan with four wins. To the ladder they went: but lo and behold, from the depths of the flight saw Roxanne Rosetto emerge undefeated through the ladder, taking out Patricia in the second round and finishing off Michael in the finals 14 to 13.

Waterford doubles consisted of four games for each of four flights. Championship and Championship II were blocks of eight, while First and Second Flights were blocks of seven. Serving as a morning warm-up, and a social mixer, it never the less became quite competitive. In Championship Jim Hall was the outright winner with a win in each of the four games played. Championship II was a lot closer, with five players amassing two wins each. By net points Mal Wall took honors over Mark Fields by one net point. First Flight saw Calvert Chaney with four wins edge out Joy Guernsey-Diesel with three wins for honors in the flight. Second Flight saw Michael Kline get a win over Gary Neal by one net point.

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Following the finals in all flights on Sunday morning and the awards presentations on the steps adjacent to the courts, participants and their guests were treated to a wonderful Father's Day Sunday brunch.

Hats off to Dawn Jupin, the Tennis and Croquet Professional who has done an exceptional job of revitalizing croquet at the Chattooga Club.

With another successful tournament completed, the plans for the Fall Autumn Leaves Invitational October 1st to 5th at the Chattooga Club are well underway. It will again be a five-day event with singles and doubles play. Hope to see you there.

Fred Jones
Tournament Director



Bill Daigle, John Rivers, David Ekstrom



George Bagwell, Joy Guernsey-Diesel, Calvert Chaney



Michael Kline, Joy Guernsey-Diesel, Roxanne Rosetto

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Championship Singles

1. Bill Daigle
2. David Ekstrom
3. John Hunter
4. Pinckney Purcell
5. Jackie Jones
6. Donna Dixon
7. Jim Hall
7. Mark Enderle
9. Ron Huxtable
9. Mal Wall
11. Tom Moss

First Flight Singles

1. George Bagwell
2. Calvert Chaney
3. Mark Fields
3. Don Smith
5. Betty Crisler
5. Jake Johnson
5. Martie Ekstrom

Second Flight Singles

1. Roxanne Rosetto
2. Michael Kline
3. Patricia Duncan
4. Rodney Calver
5. Tom Stoner
5. Lucinda Sullivan
5. Hal Denton
5. Gary Neal

Waterford Doubles:

Championship A Flight

1. Jim Hall
2. David Ekstrom
3. Donna Dixon
4. John Hunter
5. Jackie Jones
6. Pinckney Purcell
7. Ron Huxtable
8. Bill Daigle

Championship B Flight

1. Mal Wall
2. Mark Fields
3. George Bagwell
4. Mark Enderle
5. Don Smith
6. Tom Moss
7. Betty Crisler
8. Geoffrey Mattison

First Flight

1. Calvert Chaney
2. Joy Guernsey-Diesel
3. Martie Ekstrom
4. Patricia Duncan
5. Roxanne Rosetto
6. Jake Johnson
7. Tom Stoner

Second Flight

1. Michael Kline
2. Gary Neal
3. Patricia Cunningham
4. Rodney Calver
5. Hal Denton
6. Liddy Chaney
7. Lucinda Sullivan